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THE NATURE AND INFLUENCE OF WAR.

AN

ADDRESS

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DELIVERED BEFORE THE

AMERICAN PEACE SOCIETY,

AT ITS ANNUAL MEETING, MAY 29, 1843.

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Pastor of the South Church, Portsmouth, N. H.

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NATURE AND INFLUENCE OF WAR.

Gentlemen of the American Peace Society:—

The indisposition of Judge Jay, and the death of Rev. Dr. Channing, who would have been his substitute, compelled your Executive Committee to seek for this occasion the services of one, who stands in the place of such men with unfeigned diffidence, yet was unwilling to give a negative answer, which must have greatly delayed and embarrassed the preparations for the anniversary. Called thus at the eleventh hour, I come, trusting that my sincere and fervent interest in the cause may atone, in some measure, for the lack of that elaborate preparation, which I have had no time to make.

Before entering upon the train of thought, which will occupy most of my discourse, I wish to define and to defend the peculiar position of this Society. Our sole object is the promotion of international peace. Our only creed is, that war, all war, is opposed to the precepts and the spirit of the gospel. The action which we attempt upon the general mind, is directed solely to the diffusion and establishment of this one principle, and to the advocacy of measures in

accordance with it. We deprecate the blending of other principles with this. We do not, as a body, feel ourselves called upon to bear the cross of any real or alleged ultraism, other than this. On subjects, confounded by the thoughtless, and by too many reflecting people, with this, there is a very wide difference of opinion among us. Some of us maintain, others doubt, the expediency of capital punishment. Some of us assert, others deny, the inviolability of human life. Some of us believe that the right of personal self-defence is an inherent right, and ought to be exercised by a Christian in extreme cases; others regard non-resistance to evil as a duty, which admits of neither limit nor exception. Some, it may be, though I know not who, of our number, deny the lawfulness of human government; while most of us maintain the necessity, nay, the divine right of government, and admit the essential need, to every government, of sufficient force to execute law, and maintain order and wholesome subordination. Nor do we concede that these questions are necessarily involved in that of the lawfulness of war; and I will crave your attention, for a few moments, while I show you how entirely distinct from it they are.

The questions above referred to, involve only the two points, of the lawfulness of self-defence, and the right of society to punish the evil-doer. Now, both of these points may be admitted in full, without establishing the lawfulness of war; for war is always something more than defence, and something more than punishment. It is always aggressive in its character. Nor does it ever measure the evils which it inflicts, by the just deserts of those against whom it is waged, so that it never partakes of the nature of that righteous retribution, in levying which human governments profess to take pattern of the divine.

I know that we have been accustomed to speak and hear of defensive wars; but there are no such wars. Those that

are called so are retaliatory,—vindictive. They inflict evil for evil, and essay to overcome evil by evil. They are Satan casting out Satan. In private life, violent measures of self-defence are justified only in extreme cases,—in cases of immediate and intense danger, where the alternative is forcible resistance, or submission to severe personal injury. If, because a man refuses to pay me a just debt, I go to his house and beat him, that is not self-defence. Nor is it self-defence, if, because a man steals my property and beats my servants, I steal his property and beat his servants. Yet these cases correspond precisely to what has been miscalled defensive war. Nations fight in cases, in which no one will contend that individuals have a right to fight. If my neighbor claims a part of my field, and takes measures to occupy it, I cannot legally either shoot him or rob his house, in retaliation; but must enter an action of trespass, and await the process of law. But let one nation trespass upon the territory of another nation, a violent ejectment and a bloody retaliation ensue, under the delusive name of defensive war. If damage be done me by another man, he is compelled by law to remunerate me with his own property, or to endure in his own person a punishment proportioned to his offence. But let one nation receive damage from the authorities of another nation, the injured nation remunerates itself from the property, and avenges itself upon the lives, of those who bore no part in the injury. Now, so far from being hostile to the institutions of government, this Society of ours aims primarily to bring nations to settle their differences on the very principles, which bear sway in every well-ordered government. We desire to extend over nations, the restraints to which individuals submit under the constituted authorities of the state,—to substitute impartial arbitration for blind brute force, and measured restitution for reckless, wanton reprisals. We should, indeed, as a Society, present a most illustrious

spectacle of inconsistency and absurdity, were we plotting for the overthrow of all government, when for many years we have steadily pursued, at a large expense of money and effort, the project of uniting all civilized nations under one compact and comprehensive government, in a Congress or High Court of Nations.

In order to justify war on the ground of self-defence, a nation, in an unarmed condition, and in perfect quietness, must be the subject of an unprovoked attack from some other nation. Now, it is, in the very nature of things, impossible that a nation, occupying such a position, should be assailed. It is the aggressive posture,—the armed truce, so to speak,—in which nations professedly at peace stand towards each other, that invites assault. It is with nations as it is with the people at the West and South who carry bowie-knives. They get into frequent quarrels, solely from the fact of their going armed; while, did they go unarmed, as we do in New England, they might pass through life, without having the slightest occasion for exercising the right of self-defence. The experiment of quitting the aggressive posture, and going unarmed, has, so far as I know, been tried by no whole community, except by the Pennsylvania colony; but that experiment was an entirely successful one. Though surrounded by just such races of savages as slew hundreds and thousands in the Puritan colonies, the peaceful Quakers, for the seventy years for which they bore sway in Pennsylvania, were not once called upon practically to answer the question of the lawfulness of self-defence; nor did they have the honor of furnishing a single martyr to their pacific principles.

Again, in order to justify any war, on those principles of retributive justice on which criminal law is based, the injury done by the offending nation must be unprovoked and unmixed,—it must be an open and express breach of moral

right or of stipulated obligation,—it must be adjudged as such by some disinterested and impartial umpire; and the retribution taken must bear a just proportion to the injury received, must affect directly the authors of the injury alone, and must affect others, if at all, only indirectly and incidentally. Now, should a High Court of Nations ever be established, such retribution might be levied on an offending power. But *war* cannot possibly be waged with the forms, or restrained within the limits, of justice and equity. This Society, then, in denying the lawfulness of international war, interferes with none of the principles recognized in the constitution of civil government.

But it was not my intention to have dwelt so long on these preliminary matters. Nor, in what remains of this discourse, am I going to tell over again the story, with which I doubt not that most of you are already too painfully familiar, of the physical enormities and horrors of war. Appalling as these are, they by no means constitute its worst features. Suffering and death, in ghastly and distressing forms, are often the direct appointment of the Father, who "doth not willingly afflict;" and there spring forth from them the most noble and energetic traits, the most beautiful and touching manifestations, of spiritual life and energy. In bodily agony and dissolution, the Lord God omnipotent often assumes a higher sway over man's spirit, and virtue and piety win their most signal triumphs. The worst curse of war is upon the soul,—upon principle,—upon character. And this blighting moral influence is not incidental, but essential. It develops itself, not merely in the depraved habits engendered by a state of actual warfare, both among those immediately engaged in it, and the whole community to which they belong. Were this all, were the intemperance, rapacity and licentiousness, that follow in the train of war, its only or its chief moral evils, we might hope to remedy them by

multiplying high and constraining Christian influences, at a time of war, and around those who conduct its operations. But there is no healing branch that can be cast into the sea of mortal strife. War rejects the counsel, and will have none of the reproof, of the gospel. War and Christianity belong at opposite poles of the moral firmament,—are intrinsically irreconcilable; and, when they embrace, one must destroy the other. The fundamental principles of war are not only unchristian, but anti-christian. War, under the reign of Christ, is an *imperium in imperio*,—the establishment of two antagonist sovereignties, of both which the same man cannot be the subject, but if he hold to the one, he must needs despise and reject the other.

The evils of war, that are usually spoken of, are such as occur only in a state of actual warfare; and it is, perhaps, not an uncommon idea, that, were permanent peace cemented among the leading powers of Christendom, in whatever way such a result was brought about, the friends of peace would have nothing left to demand or to desire. I think very differently. Were actual warfare suspended, from motives of policy, for an indefinitely long period, yet, were the lawfulness of war still recognized, were the associations of glory connected with martial prowess left untouched, war, in a spiritual aspect, would be hardly less a curse upon mankind, than it is during a time of actual warfare. In the Peace Reform, as in all religious reformations, a merely outward change is of little avail. Indeed, vicious principle becomes only the more corrupt and vile, when deprived of its natural outlets. Pent up within, it gathers strength and virulence, till at length it bursts through all barriers, and leaps forth in desolating fury. Thus would it be emphatically with the war-spirit, if held bound by outward circumstances alone. A state of protracted peace would merge all remembrance of the horrors of war, while it would perpetually

be heightening, by the enchantment of a remote perspective, the false glitter and tawdry glory of military heroism, so that, the longer and more profound the peace, the fiercer would be the elements of combustion, which at length would break forth like the flames of a smothered volcano. It is for these reasons, that our Society has, of late years, dismissed its old argument for peace on the ground of expediency and policy, has based the cause of peace on Christian grounds, and has aimed chiefly to produce a state of sentiment conscientiously opposed to war under any and all circumstances.

I now ask your attention to some of the anti-christian maxims and principles, which flow from the mere recognition of the lawfulness of war, and which now exist and work in our midst, as truly as if our country were actually engaged in war.

1. War establishes a standard and a scale of moral excellence entirely opposed to the Christian standard and scale; and, wherever the lawfulness of war is recognized, this false standard and scale must needs be admitted. In the moral system of the gospel, was beautifully fulfilled the prediction, "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low." Jesus made prominent and essential certain virtues, which had before existed only in theory, or in the dreams of visionary perfectionists, or which had been esteemed to hold a minor rank, and to lie in the doubtful neighborhood of weakness and cowardice. He threw into the shade, or passed by without naming them, virtues which had stood at the very summit of favor with heathen moralists. He deranged the entire scale of virtue, and transposed its very extremes. He found the military virtues, aggressive courage, a quick sense of injury, bigoted patriotism, unyielding obstinacy, at the very summit of the scale. He cast them down, and cast

them out; and for courage, he put fortitude,—for resentment, forgiveness,—for patriotism, all-embracing philanthropy,—for harsh, unfeeling rigidness of purpose, a love incapable of weariness or exhaustion. These are the virtues which the cross teaches. These have the seal of the Saviour's blood. These clothed his first and nearest followers, so that their patience, meekness, and all-enduring charity, often disarmed enemies, and won their fierce persecutors to the faith of Christ with its crown of martyrdom. And of those primitive disciples, it stands recorded, that they denied the lawfulness of war, and chose rather to die than to fight. Their words were, "I am a Christian, and cannot fight;"—"It is not lawful for a servant of Christ the Lord to bear arms for any earthly consideration;"—"We, who once were slayers of one another, do not now fight against our enemies;"—"The followers of Jesus have disused the weapons of war, and no longer know how to fight."

But no sooner did Christianity enter into unholy covenant with the war-spirit,—no sooner did Christians suffer themselves to be enrolled in the armies of the empire which they were so fast converting,—than the virtues of the cross began to fade from the lives of the disciples; and never since have they marked the church as a whole. In some one obscure sect, they have still, from time to time, displayed themselves, but only in sects which have abjured war. They shine forth, with a pure and primitive radiance, from the fastnesses of the Alps, with the day-star of the Reformation, and from the peaceful republic of Penn, with the infancy of the new world. But they are now recognized by only here and there a portion of the church. They are not generally deemed the essential marks of a Christian temper. They may be wanting in an individual, and that individual still be deemed an eminent saint. They may be wanting in a church, and yet that church escape all suspicion of fatal heresy.

The tone of sentiment among Christians in general is opposed to these virtues. There are few among the professed followers of Christ, who will dare to forgive an injury. They fear that, unless they resent every imagined affront or insult, they shall be deemed pusillanimous. They are no more slow to anger, no more conciliatory and pacific in their tempers and their habits, than those who make no religious profession. They are as bigoted partisans as any. They cleave as closely as any to all prejudices and enmities grounded on the distinctions of nation, sect and color. And why is this? Because the war-spirit in the church has restored the old heathen scale of virtue, which our Saviour had reversed. The church will not disavow and denounce war,—she cannot therefore confess the spirit and adopt the virtues of the cross. The church pleads for the right of resistance unto blood,—she cannot therefore proclaim the duty of long-suffering and forbearance. The church prays for the man-slayer, blesses his banners, sings thanksgiving anthems over his work of carnage,—how then can she say to her children, "Forgive, as ye would be forgiven,—love your enemies,—bless them that curse you?" The only alternative left her (and this she has freely employed), is, to pronounce our Saviour's precepts excessive, hyperbolical, and not designed for these latter days. Yet, the question still recurs, Was his life a hyperbole? Was his spirit only for the guidance of the first ages of the church? Or was it in the language of Oriental extravagance, that he said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done?"

The church can confess Christ but partially, so long as she acknowledges the laws of Antichrist. She must tear herself from her unholy compact,—she must deny the right of men, whether individually or collectively, to break the law of God, and to violate the spirit of Jesus,—she must purge herself from blood-guiltiness; and then can she again

set forth the high, uncompromising standard of her Founder, and demand of Christians a love like his. It is on these grounds that we urge the cause of Peace upon Christians as Christians,—upon the church as the church of Christ. We believe that ours is a cause, which lies very near the springs of individual character, and the fountains of the Christian's every-day life and conversation. Men cannot and will not approve, at the same time, of resentment and retaliation between nations, and of long-suffering and forgiveness between individuals. Men cannot cry *vengeance* for their nation's wrongs, and in their own private quarrels overcome evil with good. Men cannot have and keep two codes of morals, the one for themselves as citizens, the other for themselves as private Christians. Therefore must the war-spirit be cast out of the church, in the name of Christ, before the spirit of Christ can be manifested in its full beauty and loveliness.

2. I next remark, that, in recognizing the lawfulness of war, we expressly own the right of man to set aside, at pleasure, the law of God,—we establish expediency, in the place of the divine will,—instead of "thus saith the Lord," we say, "thus seems it to us." And the precedent is a dangerous and a contagious one. We easily extend it to other subjects, and modify by it any divine law that sits ill upon us. This is, it seems to me, a consideration of great importance, and I will ask leave to develop it a little more fully.

I believe that I do the Christian advocates of war no injustice, when I say that they defend war chiefly or solely on the ground of expediency. There certainly is no basis for its defence, either in the language or the spirit of the New Testament. Every precept, every act of our Saviour's ministry, that has any bearing upon the subject, is utterly opposed to the principles and the spirit of war; nor could any

rebuke of the war-spirit have been more emphatic and solemn, than that uttered by him on the last night of his life. But, as the portion of the gospel referred to, namely, the affair of the *two swords*, has been perverted for an opposite purpose, though at the expense of a somewhat long digression, I will offer you what seems to me the only tenable exposition of it.

The *eleven* are still with their Master, at the paschal table. Hidden under Peter's robe, Jesus perceives the sword, with which the frail apostle had armed himself against impending trial; and, with special reference to that indubitable token of a faltering heart, he says to Peter, "*Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you*, you eleven, who yet remain my friends, *that he may sift you as wheat*, and may separate one and another of you from the little company of my faithful ones. *But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not*, that it may not utterly die out; *and when thou art converted*, when thou hast recovered from thy present faint-heartedness, *strengthen thy brethren.*" Simon, in the genuine bravado style of one whose trust is in the weapons of carnal warfare, exclaims, "*Lord, I am ready*,—armed,—*to go with thee both to prison and to death*,—to defend thee to the last extremity." Jesus, however, warns him of his approaching fall; and then, addressing the whole (for he perceives yet another sword in the company), he adds, "*When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing?* Were not all your wants met, all perils warded from you, by the providence of your Father?" They reply, "We lacked *nothing*." "And yet," rejoins the Saviour, "you *now* refuse to trust the same Providence, which you then found sufficient for you. You are now looking to earthly support, and not to defence from above. All things are changed with you. You now depend on purses, and scrips, and swords. Your plan now is, for *him that hath a purse, or a scrip, to take it, and for him who*

has no sword, to sell his garment (as these two foolish disciples probably had done) *and buy one. For I say unto you, that the prophecy must yet be accomplished in me,* HE WAS RECKONED WITH OUTLAWS; for outlaws you will be, if you wear and lift these weapons against the civil power." The disciples then, stung by the just severity of the rebuke, exculpate themselves generally from the charge of this most unworthy lack of faith, and say, in a deprecating tone, "*Lord, here are two swords,*—only *two* among *eleven* men. The rest of us are willing still to lean upon a guiding and preserving Providence." He replies, "*It is enough,*—the *two,* nay, *one* of them, will be enough to fulfil the prediction; for one of you will this very night lift the sword of an outlaw in my defence." This prediction Peter verifies; but the Master heals by a touch the wound inflicted by the rash disciple, and says to him, in words which ought to disarm every fighting Christian, "*Put up thy sword into the sheath; for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword.*"

It is surprising that this scene should ever have been interpreted as countenancing the use of violence or of military weapons. Any exposition, in accordance with this idea, involves a bundle of absurdities, either of them alone sufficient to condemn it. In the first place, if the apostles were to arm themselves, because their Master was going from them, we have the grotesque picture, which no Christian can bring into view, and not reject it with contempt, of the disciples of a religion of love, the missionaries of a cross of long-suffering and self-sacrifice, going about upon their errand of peace and good-will with swords at their sides. Does any one believe that Peter and John, Paul and Barnabas, wore swords? Or would modern missionaries be sustained, or even tolerated, by the church, if they carried arms on their hazardous enterprises? But were the apostles simply directed to arm themselves against the perils then so near?

This idea supposes our Saviour to have recommended to eleven men, unused to arms, forcible resistance to the whole populace of Jerusalem, backed by the entire power of the Roman empire. Besides, our Saviour, when before Pilate, expressly disclaims fighting, on the part of his followers, which he could not have done, if he had, but an hour or two before, ordered them to arm themselves. His words are, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." Then again, if we interpret this passage so as to imply a command to the disciples to arm themselves, we involve our Saviour in the absurdity of pronouncing *two* swords enough to arm *eleven* men. We also involve him in the gross self-contradiction of first commanding his followers to arm themselves for the approaching crisis, and then condemning one of them for making use of his weapon, when the crisis came.

Such is the state of the New Testament argument on the subject of war. The only passage seriously and confidently cited in its favor, when fairly interpreted, bears with immense weight on the other side. Every thing in the gospel, from the birth-song over the hills of Bethlehem, to the hands outstretched in blessing as the Saviour rose to heaven, speaks and breathes only peace on earth and good-will among men. Now it is in the face of this express revelation, this clear and full manifestation of the divine will, that the Christian must advocate the lawfulness of war. He must distinctly take the ground, that the gospel law of unlimited forbearance, forgiveness and love, though it bears in its letter no exceptions or reservations, yet cannot cover the whole of human conduct, but is, in certain cases, unsafe and impracticable, and that, in such cases, men have a right to make for themselves a code of retaliation, wrath and bloodshed. He assumes that he himself is a better judge of what is necessary and right, than

his God and his Saviour. He claims to thrust in a demurrer against their comprehensive decree, to file a bill of exceptions to their judgment. Such is, in fact, the position of almost the whole church, with reference to the gospel. The insufficiency, the falsity of the law and spirit of Christ, with reference to disputes between nations, is assumed as an axiom too obvious to need proof, by the vast majority of Christians. Now is it surprising, that, when Christians have taken the law into their own hands in this one case, they should do so in numerous others,—that their exceptions and abatements to the divine law should multiply, so as to protect for their quiet enjoyment every thing that appertains to "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life?" This they do. They take the same liberty of construction with regard to the precepts against avarice, and with regard to the application of gospel principles to business and to politics; and the assumed lawfulness of war is generally the express or implied basis of every such liberty. It is argued that, if expediency and interest may (and they confessedly may) supersede the law of universal love and forgiveness, they may, by parity of reason, set aside any other law of Jesus. The argument runs thus: "Why should we give their literal and full application to the precepts of Christ against covetousness, and the love of money, any more than we do to the commandment, which says, *Love your enemies?*" And again, "It is impossible, in the transaction of our secular business, to obey the strictest principles of reciprocal justice and kindness, and at the same time to prosper and grow rich. We surely then may set aside these principles, when the necessities of business come in conflict with them, as we are confessedly bound to set aside the same principles towards the enemies of our country." And again, "In political life, in party tactics, we cannot indeed pursue the same straight-forward and kindly course of conduct, which we

deem it our duty to pursue in private life; but then we regard our political opponents as the enemies of our country, and we plead the laws of war in defence of whatever chicanery or calumny we are obliged to employ for our country's good. Worse, more deadly weapons than these, we confessedly have a right to wield against enemies from without." It is certain that Christians do thus modify and set aside the strict principles of the gospel. Indeed, in urging upon them the most obvious duties of a Christian profession and covenant, nothing is more common than to be met by the rejoinder, not, "These things are not so written in the gospel," but, "Our circumstances will not suffer us to do thus,"—"We could not obey this precept without too much self-denial,"—"That duty would cost us an effort or a sacrifice greater than we are disposed to make,"—"We acknowledge that this law stands plainly written in the word of truth, but it surely cannot be binding upon persons of our profession, business, standing or character."

The Bible contains no truer sentiment than that of the prophet, "The way of man is not in himself,—it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Yet, when man in any one thing forsakes the divine guidance, and begins to go alone, the infatuation grows upon him; he essays to mark out his own course in other and in all matters, and petulantly asserts and maintains, in the face of the clearest and fullest commandments of God, the liberty of walking in the way of his own heart, and by the sight of his own eyes. So long as the lawfulness of war is admitted, the strict construction of the precepts of the gospel cannot be maintained,—close, literal obedience cannot be enforced,—the duty of following Jesus in all things cannot be urged,—expediency must be the measure and the rule of obligation, and the will of man must be mistress and interpreter of the law of God. But let

the teachings and spirit of Jesus on this head be admitted in full, then is the way opened for the establishment of a close, rigid, uncompromising gospel morality,—of a morality, which shall, at every step, ask without fearing the answer, "What says the law, the spirit, the example of the great Master?"

3. I next remark, that war absolves the individual conscience from its allegiance to the Creator; and that, in recognizing the lawfulness of war, we admit the fitness, nay, the duty of obeying man rather than God. Implicit obedience is the oath of the soldier, and the life of the army. The rank and file must obey without questioning the orders of the captain, he those of his commanding officer, and he in his turn those of the bureau of war. The order may be to plunder and murder the unresisting and defenceless,—to burn the dwelling of weaponless age,—to mingle men, women and children (if they happen to be Indians or Malays) in indiscriminate slaughter. There must be no questioning, no delay. The work, though it be such as a fiend would spurn, must be done with an unfaltering hand, and without a word of remonstrance upon the lips. The soldier, the officer, has no right to inquire as to the lawfulness of the war in which he is engaged. He has sold his conscience to his country, to do her bidding, whatever it be. No matter whether she sends him to injure those who have injured her, or to aid in some wanton aggression upon an unoffending community,—no matter whether to defend her own homes, or to drive her weaker neighbors from theirs,—no matter whether to protect her honest and lawful commerce, or to screen from righteous resentment the fraud and villany of her traders,—no matter whether to break the rod of an oppressor, or to force intoxication and poison upon a nation which has striven to work itself free. The true soldier asks not the nature of the

service required of him,—his country is accountable, not he. He cannot go behind the word of command. The moment he reasons of right and justice, he violates his oath, and becomes false to his profession.

The view which I have now presented of the military profession, is held not only by the multitude, but by its most intelligent and worthy members. I remember once talking about the moral character of the Florida war with an officer who was a professing Christian, who said expressly, "We soldiers have nothing to do with the right or wrong of the war,—it is enough for us that it is one of the wars of the country, whose servants we are." And among the officers engaged in that most unrighteous of wars, among those who with their own hands shed innocent blood, were not a few men of high and approved Christian standing,—men, who in all the relations and duties of private life are conscientious, exemplary and faithful. Shall Christians sanction an institution, which thus separates between man and his Maker, —which makes men do deeds full of the deepest moral significance, without letting them take cognizance of the moral character of their own actions? We believe that every one must give account of himself to God. We have no idea that, in the judgment of the great day, the robber or the murderer will be held guiltless, because he wore a scarlet coat, and robbed and murdered at the command of one yet more gorgeously apparelled. We think not that, at the august tribunal of the Almighty, a commander can appear for his army, or a minister of war for his generals. And, because every man must there bear his own iniquity, we deprecate an institution, which denies individual responsibleness, and binds the conscience in bonds, which death must annul, and the all-seeing Judge reverse.

The renouncement of individual responsibleness, inseparable

from war and all military establishments and operations, is yet more to be deprecated, because it is copied in other departments of life, and is made the precedent for a vast amount of wanton, reckless and irresponsible conduct. The army is taken as a model for sects, clans and parties,—for every organization, by which men are drawn in the train, and made to execute the bidding of unprincipled leaders. War first taught the counting of men by scores and hundreds, and not as separate and individually responsible souls; and, wherever blindfolded men are driven about in masses, at the will of priest or demagogue, agitator or fanatic, they are victims of a discipline borrowed of the camp, and worthy of its origin.

4. To pass with some abruptness to another important point, which, however, I must after a very few remarks leave to your own reflection, the recognition of the lawfulness of war, by its necessary effect upon literature, exerts a highly deleterious influence in the education of the young. So long as war is deemed lawful, its deeds and heroes will be painted in attractive colors, and held forth for the admiration and praise of mankind,—its anniversaries will be a nation's gala-days,—its glories will crowd the page of history, inspire the tragic muse, and float on the breath of song. Until the war-spirit is cast out, it will infect all popular literature, and will keep in currency its own legends and traditions of thrilling interest and pathos. Now, in all the forms and recognitions of military prowess and glory, there is much of that glaring lustre, which always attracts and fascinates the young and unpractised eye. Few children grow up, without having, through a part or the whole of early life, deemed war the most glorious work of man, and deeds of blood his noblest deeds.

These false sentiments are generally cherished by popular school-books. The miniature histories, which our children study, bristle all over with battles and with sieges. The chief things that they learn about nations, are their wars. Then, too, for exercises in reading, they are judiciously furnished with the speeches of generals to their armies, with the blood-thirsty declamations of patriot fanatics, with battle hymns and victory songs.

Now the mere cessation of war will not purge our literature, or cleanse the fountains of education. We may be at peace for a century to come, and still our children's children be cursed with all this bloody literature and song. What we need is a reformation in the great heart of our nation and of Christendom,—the casting out of the war-spirit, —the enthroning of the spirit of Jesus in its place. Then will our youth draw their first moral lessons from a healthful and Christian literature,—from poetry and song baptized with the Holy Spirit.

But I cannot permit myself much longer to trespass upon your patience. In my discourse this evening, I have endeavored to play the gleaner in the train of those who have gathered sheaves in this field. But I have not fared as Ruth the Moabitess did in the field of Boaz, when he bade his young men to leave whole sheaves in her way, and rebuke her not. The faithful reapers, who have gone before me, left me no whole sheaves; and you may think that the scanty gleanings which I have made were not worth gathering, or, at least, were not worth showing. Such as they are, you have them. And now a word or two with reference to the past and the future of our Society.

We have abundant reason for gratitude to God, when we review the history of our enterprise and our cause. When

this Society was first formed, there was perhaps, out of the sect of Quakers, not an individual in the country, who stood upon the ground on which our Society now stands, namely, that of the entire and irreconcilable discrepancy between war and the gospel. Even the fathers of our Society were not then prepared to occupy this position in its full length and breadth. Now there are thousands in every part of the country, and in every profession and walk of life, who maintain our principles in their entireness, while there pervades all sober and intelligent people a sensitiveness of feeling on this subject, a disposition to inquire, a willingness to be taught, a growing preference of the things which make for peace. This change has been brought about, under God, chiefly through the quiet, humble, unostentatious agency of our Society. By the same means has a kindred spirit been called into vigorous and progressive action, in England and on the continent of Europe. Twice within the last ten years, difficulties between our nation and European powers, in which twenty years ago an appeal to arms would have been inevitable, have been settled by amicable negotiation. And who shall say that it was not the spirit diffused from our Society, which, in those two instances, turned the scale in favor of peace, at least by having awakened the general conscience to the evils and horrors of war, and thus made our people reluctant to plunge into hostilities, while there remained a backward step which they could take with honor?

For the future, we believe that our cause is safe, and must grow. We have sought to bind it to the everlasting gospel, —to restore to the word of God, as preached and believed, those principles of unwearied forbearance and unrestricted charity between individuals and nations, which form an essential part of the written word. When this is accomplished,

our mission is fulfilled. But not yet; for there are still those who preach a gospel of strife, and who can bless in the name of Jesus garments rolled in blood. Our principles still need labored and systematic advocacy, and we therefore earnestly solicit aid for the operations, and patronage for the publications of our Society.

I cannot close, without offering my sincere tribute to the memory of an early and devoted friend of our cause, the lamented CHANNING, who, had he lived, would have been now standing in my place. He was a friend of peace, because he loved man as man, as a child of God, as a brother, —because he felt that every soul of man was unspeakably precious,—because he cherished those finer, richer sentiments of our common nature, which war outrages and violates. Indeed, for what cause of human progress and salvation did not his sympathies flow freely and warmly? Were I to characterize his peculiar excellence as a philanthropist, I should say that it consisted in his keeping the first and second great commandments of the law, in the relative order in which God and Christ have placed them, making love to God the first and chief commandment, and then making the second "like unto it" in its purity, elevation and comprehensiveness. Philanthropy withers without piety. They are together the one tree of life. It is piety, as it takes root in the clefts of the Rock of ages; it is philanthropy, as it puts forth its branches far and wide, with cheering blossoms and with healing fruit. What God hath thus joined, our lamented friend never put asunder. He loved man for his Father's sake, and blessed him in his Father's name. He loved all men; for they were all God's children. He labored for them, because he felt that the pitying eye of Heaven was upon them. We mourn for ourselves, that he, who, in every

good work, was so well fitted to mark out our way and to lead in our counsels, can now speak to us only through the written page and in the memory of his virtues. But for him, when we look back upon his meek and holy walk, and remember his gentle and sweet release from earthly infirmities and burdens, we can only say:

"Calm on the bosom of thy God,
Fair spirit! rest thee now;
E'en while with ours thy footsteps trod,
His seal was on thy brow.

"Dust, to its narrow house beneath!
Soul, to its place on high!
They that have seen thy look in death,
No more may fear to die."

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